

Fraz Betts, ACF (Adult Care Facility) Home Operator

Ohio Adult Care Facilities Association Board Member

HB 33 336 510 Residential State Supplement

It is important for RSS to be increased for both the operators and the residents. For me to explain why it is important, you must understand fully what housing residents means. Operators are responsible for the safety and well-being of their residents 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Operators must monitor the psychiatric and medical status of the residents, clean, prepare meals three times a day, plus snacks, do laundry, and change linen, provide and document personal care services. Effective January 2018, the Ohio Administrative Code resulted in added responsibilities that are not reflected in the current rate passed 7 years ago.

Operators must advocate for the residents, because they are unable to advocate for themselves, that means being available to meet with primary care physicians, psychiatrists, case managers, pharmacists, and family members. With all the responsibilities operators require employees. It is known that in the present environment, you cannot get anyone to work unless at a minimum you can pay a competitive wage. Every resident comes with diverse needs, which require different levels of assistance. One of my homes is all men, and most of them have a unique way of using the bathroom, which requires constant cleaning. Imagine having that as part of your job? How much are you willing to be paid to do that? The current RSS payment of \$36.00 a day is not enough to attract more group homes and will cause the closure of many existing homes. Twenty-eight years ago, after the hospital I worked at for 25 years closed, I wanted to be a motivational speaker to my comrades, but my inner voice said to me they are not the only ones that need to be educated about mental health. In closing, please familiarize yourself with the important work we do. We need to increase wages and meet the challenges of rising costs to be able to ensure we can continue to provide housing and advocate extensively for the vulnerable community of individuals with mental health.

Governor DeWine's Budget made great strides in the funding of much needed mental health services. The amended House version of the Budget Bill for FY24-23 (HB 33) is disappointing with the cuts to the Governor's proposed budget. One of the most disappointing cuts in HB 33 was the removal of the increase for the Residential State Supplement that supplements and provides housing for hundreds of Ohioans living with mental illnesses. We are pleading for the Senate to return to the Executive Budget's as-introduced allocation amounts for the **336 510 Residential State Supplement** line at \$24,000,000 per year which equates to a proposed \$1,600 per month versus the current \$1,100 per month. The lack of housing is at crisis level and mental health group homes have not seen an increase in funding for **over 7 years**. We see an increase in demand for group homes as more and more homes close due to inadequate funding and the group home operators are faced with a heavier financial burden in today's economy.